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ABSTRACT

Welcome back to the Somerton School District, Somerton, Arizcna. Two years have passed since the writing of the first part of the "Somerton Story" (see RC 003 374). Since that time, the Somerton district has been able to realize some of its goals for the improvement of education for all of its migrant children. Some changes have been made, the attempt to "refine" the instructional program has been successful, and a few new programs have been added. All of these activities are described in the document under the following headings: Coordinators of Instruction, Teacher Training, Open Houses, Parent Conferences and Grading, Home Visitations, O. L. Carlisle School League, Adult Education, Rotary Club Help, Television Magic, The Record Transfer System, Teacher Exchanges and Consultation, Evaluation, and Rewards for Achievement. (EJ)

ED044226

THE SOMERTON STORY

PART II

A PROGRESS REPORT ON THE SOMERTON DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL FOR MIGRANT CHILD EDUCATION

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ARIZONA
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August, 1970

RC004833

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

WITHOUT THE COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE FROM THE FOLLOWING, THE SOMERTON STORY AS RELATED ON THESE PAGES WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE:

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Dear Reader:

It has been increasingly apparent since the initial implementation of a demonstration Migrant Educational Program in Somerton that there has been a continual attempt to improve educational opportunities for migrant children. Special efforts are being made to share these experiences with others through the printing of "The Somerton Story".

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the administrators and teachers at Somerton who have shown so much interest and have done so much work in making this story possible.

May "The Somerton Story" serve other educators to gain inspiration and discover new dimensions in meeting the educational needs of our migrant children.

Sincerely,

W. P. Shofstall, Ph. D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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WELCOME BACK!

Two years have passed by quickly since the initial writing of "The Somerton Story," and these pages will attempt to update the progress and programs in migrant education in the Somerton School District, Somerton, Arizona.

Part I of this narrative described the district's building programs, curriculum changes, health and nutritional improvements, inservice education, and teacher training. The publication concluded with a section outlining the district's future and proposed needs.

Since that writing, the Somerton district has been able to realize some of its goals for the improvement of education for all of its children. Some changes have been made, the attempt to "refine" the instructional program has been successful, and a few new programs have been added. All of these activities are described in Part II, with the following headings serving as guides:

A. COORDINATORS OF INSTRUCTION:

<u>A Dynamic Duo</u>

B. TEACHER TRAINING:

<u>Ongoing Upgrading</u>

C. OPEN HOUSES:

<u>Full Houses</u>

D. PARENT CONFERENCES AND GRADING:

<u>A Family Communications Story</u>

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"Bienvenidos"

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PTA, No! League, ¡Sí!

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Learning Keeps Pace with the Electric Bill

H. ROTARY CLUB HELP:

"Service Above Self"

I. TELEVISION MAGIC:

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Computerized Competence

K. TEACHER EXCHANGES AND CONSULTATION:

Wider Views

L. EVALUATION:

A Matter of Direction

M. REWARDS FOR ACHIEVEMENT:

Bonus Bonanza

A. COORDINATORS OF INSTRUCTION: A Dynamic Duo

Perhaps the biggest change at Somerton during the 1969-70 school year was the addition of two Coordinators of Instruction. Both positions were filled by master teachers, one working with kindergarten through the fourth grade teachers and the other working with teachers from grades four through eight. Both coordinators taught for half a day and coordinated programs the other half.

The district felt a definite need for this type of position for two obvious reasons. First, many university personnel and other consultants had spent many days in Somerton working with teachers and establishing the groundwork for an improved instructional program. Various workshops, seminars, and extension courses had all added much to the individual teacher's effectiveness in working with migrant children. After three years of this training, however, Somerton's administrators and teachers knew that they were reaching the time when they would have to proceed on their own. The district had served as a demonstration school for migrant child education for three years, but an established long-range, ongoing program was the need for the future. After considerable discussion and planning, the decision was made for the coordinator position to begin in August of 1969.

Following the announcement of the plan, applications were submitted by one third of the Somerton faculty. The administration and the Board of Trustees discussed all the applications and selected the initial people for the first year of work. Both teachers selected were considered master teachers with at least ten years of teaching experience and a background in the migrant child inservice and educational programs held at Somerton and in other parts of the country. Both teachers had also participated in the Migrant Teacher Exchange Program that is sponsored yearly by the Migrant Child Education Division of the Arizona Department of Education.

The coordinators began their work one month before the opening of school, doing what was probably their most valuable

contribution to the entire program. This was the organization of teaching materials, equipment, and supplies. As a demonstration school, Somerton had been fortunate to secure many different teaching materials in the three years prior to 1969, but no one had been able to organize, maintain, and circulate in the best possible way everything that was available. This was the first challenge for the coordinators, but it was a challenge met and mastered. School officials felt throughout the 1969-70 school year that materials were being placed in the proper classrooms at the proper times, with a view toward a long-range program and a constant reminder of the total district structure so that duplication and needless repetition for children would be avoided. This coordination of teaching materials will remain a constant concern of any school district, but Somerton feels that having two classroom teachers with released time for effective coordination is a definite improvement over other methods attempted.

The K-4 coordinator, who taught for half a day in the kindergarten program, was also in charge of weekly inservice training sessions for all grade levels under her responsibility. These sessions offered teachers each week the opportunity to discuss problems, the best use of materials, and general brainstorming. Traditionally, teachers within a school can reach a point where they do not communicate with one another.Somerton's coordinators helped the communication process by bringing people together so that they did know what the other person was doing, whether he was next door or at a higher or lower grade level.

The emphasis for the coordinator at the kindergarten and pre-first grade level was on Oral English Development through a team teaching approach. The team technique meant that very small groups were possible, with each group being determined according to the child's English language ability. Flexible grouping was the constant guideline throughout the year, with students changing as progress was made. The various group activities involved much repetition of sentences through music and finger plays and the exposure of the students to five adult models throughout the day, rather than the traditional one teacher. The team approach at this level also provided the framework for the beginning of a kindergarten bilingual program scheduled for the 1970-71 school year.

In the other primary grades, the coordinator assisted with the placement of children into special classes for a daily period of extra help in Oral English Development. The classes also gained a greater awareness of their respective cultures and backgrounds, partly because of the teachers' interests and training and partly because the primary work was individualized to meet the special needs of as many children as possible. The coordinator also assisted others with effective small group instruction and the proper use of instructional aides so that all children could be reached and be made to feel educationally comfortable.

The upper grades coordinator early in the year worked for the establishment of a daily television news program, in Spanish and English. These newscasts were five to ten minutes long each morning and featured students from the junior high grades for all announcing, special effects, mechanical work, and anything else required for an interesting broadcast. As these students became proficient in the use of the closed circuit television facilities, they were able to help all classes with the filming of exception-

ally good and useful programs that could be viewed whenever a teacher wanted them. They helped with the administration of the district's achievement testing, they filmed an open house program to inform parents of many of the school's activities and they used their skill for the production of many special programs for holidays throughout the year.

Because she taught for half a day in the junior high program, the upper grade coordinator had time to meet with all the teachers in her area and to help them as needed. Like her counterpart in the lower grades, she was able to be of special help to the new teachers to the district, especially in the first few months of school with materials, equipment, and various diagnostic testing techniques used in the upper grades.

Both coordinators were also able to plan with the administration and to recommend plans for various open houses, home visitations, and parent conferences, all of which are discussed in more detail later in this section.

The upper grade coordinator was also responsible for beginning a school newspaper, produced by junior high students, bilingual in parts, and an experiment for the beginning of a photography course of study. She also worked with her colleagues to stress individualization of instruction to fit the needs of the student. This was accomplished partly through grouping in reading and mathematics and with a unit approach in social studies and science instead of the traditional adherence to a single textbook. Also stressed was the use of textbooks on many different levels within one classroom so that books were fitted to the student rather than strictly assigning all fifth grade books to all fifth graders, as an example. To help with these programs, the Materials Center adopted a more flexible schedule for the year so that the materials and equipment there were usable to any teacher at almost any time of the day. With passes, any student could go to the Center at any time during the day rather than just during his assigned class period.

INSTRUCTIONAL
MATERIALS CENTER.....

Like most migrant schools, Somerton begins each school year with a low enrollment and then gains students as the year progresses. Families begin moving into the Somerton area in October and continue until a high is reached, usually in January, but that high enrollment then remains for the balance of the school year. Because of this situation, though, many classes do become overcrowded, and the coordinators were both able to provide some assistance in the largest classrooms during the 1969-70 year. Both people were able to take special classes from January through the rest of the school year and provide special help that was not available from any other source. The extra help was especially possible since the coordinating duties were not as demanding at that time of the year as they had been in the fall. In addition, the K-4 coordinator started a program of taking a teacher's class so that she could visit other classrooms for an hour or so during the day. This gave teachers the opportunity to view the progress of children at lower and higher grade levels, as well as allowing the teachers the opportunities to learn new techniques and

skills. Somerton had wanted to participate in a program in which teachers could visit other districts, but the general feeling at the present time is that much can be learned by having the opportunity to visit the teacher next door, or other teachers in the same district.

Following the initial year of the program, a few modifications have been made in the coordinator arrangement for Somerton. Since the real need is for the coordination of instruction in the first six grades, the 1970-71 coordinators will have responsibility for kindergarten through the third grade for one and the fourth through the sixth grade for the other. In order to accomplish this, both coordinators will have the same classroom assignment, with one to teach in the morning and coordinate in the afternoon and the other person to reverse that procedure. As it turned out, the two coordinators will be in the bilingual kindergarten program, although they might have been in any of the other grade levels for this type of program to function. One of the coordinators will be new to the program, with one to continue for a second year. One of the guidelines at the beginning was that as many teachers as possible should have the opportunity to serve at least a year or two as a coordinator. The experience should help to make that teacher more effective and certainly more knowledgeable about the district, other teachers, and the many resources.

What Somerton has done is to have two master teachers involved in the program where perhaps an assistant principal might be functioning in the traditional school organization. Somerton, though, feels that it can only make progress by having informed, professional, trained, and enthusiastic classroom teachers. The coordinator program appears to be contributing to that end result.

B. TEACHER TRAINING: <u>Ongoing Upgrading</u>

If the key to an improved educational program is the informed, professional classroom teacher, any school district must be certain that teacher training is a continuous process. In the past, this has been easier said than done for many smaller, isolated migrant schools far removed from the state universities. Somerton, though, feels that it has overcome the problem in several ways.

With the demonstration school in full force, the district was able to conduct many different workshops and training sessions each summer and throughout the regular school year. Teachers had the opportunity to study the many different advances in education, to attempt new approaches, and to have a consultant close by for evaluation. With the beginning of the 1968-69 year, however, the consultants became fewer in number while the emphasis shifted to the university level, graduate extension course.

In order to have any type of extension course, various factors must be considered by the local district. These include finding the required minimum number of qualified teachers who are willing to enroll and pay the tuition, as well as finding qualified university personnel willing to travel a minimum of 200 miles once a week to teach a class. Somerton has conducted four courses in the past two years, one a semester, with each one a definite success, and it's a tribute to the Somerton faculty and their desire to continue their individual training and professional upgrading. Helping the cause is an air line, which provides fast service between Phoenix and Yuma so that the university personnel can often leave their campus in mid afternoon, be in Somerton ready to teach by 4:30 p.m., and be back home in time for the 10:00 p.m. news on television.

The district first brought in people to teach courses in elementary school science and language arts during the first year of the extension program. The second year, the courses centered on learning disabilities and reading. Plans for the 1970-71 school year are for courses in modern mathematics and individualized instruction. Care is taken to insure that course content will meet the specific needs of the Somerton area and the migrant child to be served. Of special value is the fact that the professors are able to see the facilities available in Somerton, learn about the needs of the children, and then gear their instruction specifically to what can be done most effectively for the children needing the most help.

Additionally, Somerton has played an important part in helping with the first annual Migrant Teacher Institute, co-sponsored by Arizona State University and the Arizona Department of Education. The four week institute during the summer months included the first week at Somerton, where the thirty participants had the opportunity to visit classrooms and see teachers involved in the summer program. Following this was a three week session on the Arizona State University campus where the participants discussed migrant child education in general and worked toward specific solutions for their individual school districts. Besides serving as host for one week, the Somerton district was represented with participants from its faculty, people in leadership roles who were able to share their learning with other teachers during the regular school year.

As Somerton has grown, so too has its reputation, as evidenced by an increasing demand from other districts to use local personnel in consulting capacities. Mrs. Lydia Swengel, K-4 coordinator, was named chairman of a statewide workshop sponsored by the Arizona Education Association to discuss the needs of the bilingual, migrant child. She has also been asked to help other districts with teacher training and Oral English Development work. Mrs. Leah Slaughter, a Somerton bilingual teacher for almost twenty years, has also served at various statewide workshops and has assisted many other teachers with special programs. This type of involvement is encouraged by Somerton officials, since improved educational opportunities for all children, whether they live in Somerton or elsewhere, is a constant goal. The attempt presently in Somerton is to have many other teachers develop into strong leadership roles so that they can take an active part in furthering migrant education at all levels.

C. OPEN HOUSES: Full Houses

Because the district felt several years ago that parents and patrons in the area were extremely important to any child's educational program, plans were started to include these adults in school activities in a number of ways. One of the most successful of these ways has been a plan of Open House at the school twice a year.

The present program includes an Open House early in November, to coincide with the end of the first quarter and American Education Week. The second Open House is held late in the spring so that visitors might view completed projects and units, as well as see students perform in a variety of ways.

One consultant in Somerton remarked several years ago that many parents of migrant children hesitate to take part in school activities for several reasons. One reason would be a fear of the school, since some of these parents have memories only of a place where possibly they were ridiculed for not knowing the English language, where they were perhaps swatted by a principal for occasionally lapsing into their native language, and a place from which they knew they had to escape at the earliest possible opportunity, even if that meant going into the fields with their own parents. Other reasons included a need to remain home to rest after a tiring day of field work, a feeling of inferiority for not being able to dress as well as some of the others, and a miscellaneous variety of other reasons. These reasons were indeed valid ones for many of the migrant parents, and they became challenges to the Somerton faculty to break down some of the barriers and to have many parents take a more active part in the school.

The initial planning was under the direction of the district's Public Relations Committee, chaired by a junior high school mathematics teacher and composed of the superintendent, the principal, the two coordinators, and five other teachers. This group of ten people met often to discuss open houses in general and to consider the many challenges before them in reaching the many migrant parents. Though

four successful open houses have been held since that preliminary planning period, each event has been different in content but similar in planning and preparation.

Included in the programs have been intensive publicity notices, including newspaper and television coverage, a district newsletter in English and Spanish, special invitations written by each student, involvement of many parents in the program, and a definite emphasis toward encouraging the children to bring their parents to the school. This latter effort has been the most successful, since the children often amaze their parents by being so enthusiastic about school and wanting Papa and Mama to share this enthusiasm, meet their teachers, and see the many different facilities used daily. Among other things, the open houses have included all types of demonstrations and displays, a student talent show, a flower arranging contest for all children (with local senior citizens serving as judges), a mini-schedule for junior high departmentalized classes, a rocket display, television specials, baby sitting services, and many similar events.

Crowds at the open houses to date have ranged from 500 to 800 guests. For an enrollment of 1,000 students, this number of parents and friends is highly representative and satisfying to the committee members in charge of arrangements. Plans are to continue having two open houses each year, although each event will continue to be different enough so that parents will always be able to see still another part of the Somerton educational program.

D. PARENT CONFERENCES AND GRADING: A Family Communications Story

During one of Somerton's summer workshops, the teachers became involved in learning disabilities, diagnostic techniques, and possible solutions to problem areas. As part of the requirement for credit in the workshop, the teachers were to compile a case study for one child, someone suspected of having some type of disability that could be diagnosed and treated. A part of the case study included an interview with the child's parents and a home visitation to complete a questionnaire and to study the child's home environment. From this beginning has come a district-wide effort for additional conferences and home visitations, for the need to do more of this was recognized by those who participated in the first summer program. Home visitations are discussed in the following section, but the current plan of parent conferences and grading follows.

Though not an isolated situation, the parent interview held by one first grade teacher during the summer of 1969 serves to pinpoint the need that Somerton faces. The teacher found out from talking to the parents, through an aide translator, that they considered their young daughter to be doing well in school. In reality, though, the girl was not doing well, and her report card indicated this. The parents, however, had the idea that the marks on the card, including several "D's" and "F's," indicated good work. The only question they had was to inquire about the practice used by one teacher of rewarding hard work with a candy bar. Their daughter never did know exactly what she had to do in order to receive a candy bar. She thought that if she kept quiet, she might get one; but she didn't. She thought that if she worked hard, she might get rewarded; but she wasn't. She then told her parents that she felt that if she moved around in the class and talked a lot, she might get her candy bar, because she had noticed that a boy who did these things was so rewarded. Her parents were also confused, but they didn't believe that class disturbances would be so rewarded. This interview, as indicated, was in the summer months, and the

candy caper had been going on throughout the entire preceding year, although the parents and their daughter never learned how the game was played. Because of this interview and others like it, Somerton's faculty was rudely reminded that previous communications had not always worked, and other methods were needed.

With the help of the coordinators from the beginning, a plan was established for parent conferences at school to discuss grades and to review a child's entire school program. In conjunction with this was a faculty committee to recommend to the Board of Trustees a different type of report card for use during the 1969-70 school year.

As it evolved, the conference plan replaced the report card entirely for reporting to parents at the end of the first nine weeks of school. Individual conferences were scheduled for all parents of children in kindergarten through the sixth grade, during a week with a minimum daily schedule. Parents of junior high school students had the option of making appointments with any or all of their child's teachers at that level. Taken into consideration especially was the need to meet with parents of migrant children. Some of these children were very recent arrivals, and teachers wanted to know about previous school experiences that year, if any, plans for the remainder of the year, if known, and other general information, including health and family data.

The district worked hard to publicize these conferences and to spread the impression that the parents were required to attend to meet with the teachers. During the first day for the appointments, few parents showed up. Those who did, though, seemed both pleased and surprised that the teachers were so interested in meeting with them, that translators were always provided for non-English speaking parents, and that the entire interview was concerned solely with helping the child by a cooperative approach. The word must have spread after that first day, since more parents started coming in from the second day on, including those who had missed earlier appointments. At the end of the week, the district found that 90 per cent of all parents had met their child's teacher, although the figure was 98 per cent for the Mexican American parents. A few

skeptics had predicted earlier that the Mexican American parents would not show up at all. Perhaps at first they were not very willing to make the visit to the school, but they felt that they should, and they did. The one problem is that very few parents arrived at their scheduled time, but most teachers overlooked this in gratitude for the fact that they were there. The general feeling presently is that the ice breaking has been accomplished, and future parent conferences will be relatively easier and more productive for all concerned.

The report card used in the first six grades during the 1969-70 school year is also a reflection on the district's feelings toward the need to communicate and the concern with grade pressure. The card, used on a trial basis only until more definite opinions can be formed, has eliminated the letter grade and relied on "E," "S," and "U" marks. The general theory is that a child will be marked satisfactory if he is progressing adequately, according to his ability. Hopefully, the report card committee had in mind that this type of reporting would reduce the unnecessary pressures that often result from grades and cause later problems for many children. In addition, in a district with about 80 per cent of the students being bilingual, progress in some areas is slow because of the child's difficulty with English. As that child has the opportunity to improve his English, he has the opportunity to spurt ahead in his learning; but until that time, his progress might be slow and might be evaluated traditionally with a failing grade. With very many failures in the early grades, many children will give up and become the dropouts that add greatly to society's problems. In the 1970's, all children, but especially migrants, need as much encouragement as possible, from all areas, to remain in school as long as possible. The special need for the migrant child is the changing technological world and the gradual phasing out of the need for the field worker in favor of mechanical devices. Though grading alone will not guarantee keeping any child in school, Somerton feels that it can be one of many factors that will help.

E. HOME VISITATIONS: "Bienvenidos"

Somerton's faculty took to the road themselves during the 1969-70 school year, although the journeys were short compared to the average number of miles a migrant child will travel in any one year. The faculty, though, engaged in a program of home visitations, and many miles were driven on Thursday afternoons throughout the entire school year.

The details of the home visitation program were worked out during the summer of 1969, largely by the two coordinators, the principal, and a consultant from Arizona State University. The plan was to have the primary teachers all visit a different home on one Thursday and then meet together as a group the following Thursday to discuss their visits, list the needs of the family visited, and prepare a written report for central filing. Teachers in the intermediate grades were to visit homes on alternate Thursday afternoons and then meet as a group at school on the days when the primary teachers were visiting.

The plan did not work as it was outlined, and changes were made early in the year. Though the teachers were ready and willing to do their part, many parents, for one reason or another, asked for different appointment times and generally indicated a less rigid schedule would be preferred. As a result, all teachers in the first six grades were to try to schedule home visitations at least twice a month, regardless of which Thursday was used, and this plan did work most successfully. Written reports were compiled for every home visit and filed in the coordinator's office so that everyone, including junior high school teachers, could have easy access to the family information as gathered by the visiting teacher.

No attempt was made for every teacher to visit the parents of every child in his room. The general plan was to visit one home at least once during the year, regardless of which teacher was involved for families with more than one child in school. The purpose of the visitation was largely a general orientation for the parents

as to what the district is trying to accomplish in all areas, what special services are available through the school, and what special needs a family might have. The reports that have been collected have proved extremely valuable to everyone, including the school nurse, the administration, and the entire faculty. From the parents' viewpoint, the visits appeared to be well received and appreciated. The only reluctance that was evident on the part of some parents was that they felt the teachers were serving above and beyond the general call of professional duty by adding the visitations to their already busy schedule.

Some modifications are being made in the home visitation program for the future, but they will remain basically as they have been. Less time will be spent throughout the year, but the hope remains that many families, and especially families new to the area, will be visited by a Somerton teacher at some time during the year.

F. O.L. CARLISLE SCHOOL LEAGUE: PTA, No! League, ¡Sí!

Another change made during the 1969-70 school year was the demise of the Somerton Parent-Teacher Association and the birth of the O.L. Carlisle School League. The change was effected by some of the parents of the community more than it was by any of the school district personnel, but everyone is agreed that an improvement has been made.

The PTA in Somerton through the years more than did its share of contributing to a successful school program. As Somerton's school population, though, gradually shifted from its less than 50 per cent Mexican American population to its present 76 per cent, fewer and fewer parents were active in the PTA. A committee of the leading PTA mothers decided that a new type of organization was needed to involve the many Mexican American mothers who wanted to help as they could but who were not at all interested in the format or the procedures of the traditional PTA. After many meetings and much discussion, the idea of the League evolved, and it became officially established in the fall of 1969.

The major difference between the League and the PTA is informality. The League is local only, it meets when it needs to, and it participates in activities directly related to the school and to the children, on those occasions when parents' help is vitally needed. A specific example is an annual Halloween carnival held at school for the community, with all proceeds to go toward a school project. Though many teachers and aides work at this carnival, many more parents are needed; and the League provides that help. League members have also helped with the school health program, with Open Houses, with transportation, with the eighth grade graduation, and in many other ways. The important point to the district is that the O.L. Carlisle School League is a vital asset to any program, and the members will be involved more and more in the future as parents and the school personnel can work together for a stronger program.

G. ADULT EDUCATION: Learning Keeps Pace with the Electric Bill

School does not end in Somerton with the ringing of the 3:30 p.m. bell and the departure of the last bus from school. More and more adults are becoming involved in adult education classes, and the district is encouraging this trend as much as it can. Four groups are presently involved with assisting adults to learn, and all of these groups are welcomed to use school facilities. The Migrant Opportunity Program has a strong adult emphasis, with classes provided in a variety of areas but with stress on vocational training. A Title III program in Arizona provides the district with one teacher and an aide who hold classes twice a week for English as a Second Language. The Yuma County Economic Opportunity Council, working through the Somerton Neighborhood Council, has provided classes in general education, English, and citizenship. A fourth group is adult education provided by Somerton's VISTA workers, and this has included general education in whatever subjects might be of interest to a given group of adults.

The plan for the future is to continue to use the district's facilities for as much adult education and related training as possible. One addition to the present offerings is a beginning Spanish course scheduled for two nights a week during the 1970-71 school year. The course will be available to Somerton's teachers and administrators, but will also be open to all parents and businessmen who want to enroll. Another possibility for the future is the use of the district's closed circuit television facility for adult education, and this is discussed in more detail in a later section.

H. ROTARY CLUB HELP: "Service Above Self"

Recognized as one of the smallest but most dynamic Rotary Clubs in Arizona, the Somerton Rotarians have proved to be among the school district's finest boosters. As the only service club in the community, the Somerton Rotary membership is made up of leading representatives from the school district administration, Somerton government, local service agencies, farms, and businesses. Because local restaurants do not have facilities for club meetings, the Somerton Rotarians meet each week during the school year in the school cafeteria, after lunch is served to all the children.

Because of the meeting place and the members' interest in the only school in Somerton, Rotarian support of the district has been outstanding in a number of ways. Traditionally, Rotary Clubs have assisted school children in many ways, but the Somerton members have achieved far more in helping children than most traditional clubs.

As an example, the Rotarians each December package more than 1,000 sacks of goodies for distribution to every child from kindergarten through the eighth grade. The packages include apples, oranges, nuts, and candy--and an ample supply of all items. A local Santa Claus is made available to go to each classroom to distribute the packages, with Rotarians and local Boy Scouts helping. While many children would be rather indifferent to receiving a sack filled with more of the same things they already have at home, many of Somerton's children are thrilled and overjoyed to receive anything at all. Some of the younger children cry in the happiness of getting a gift, and it is a rare Rotarian who isn't touched in watching the children guard their treasures so carefully on the way home from school. For some children, the Rotary package is the only gift received at Christmas time.

The 1969-70 school year in Somerton found the Rotary Club with a new activity, one so successful that it will be continued in the years ahead. The club hosted every member of the Somerton faculty

and staff for a back-to-school luncheon on the first day of the orientation in the fall. The teachers, administrators, aides, and all classified employees were guests of the Rotary Club, along with members of the Board of Trustees. Many kind words were spoken about support from the community, the hope that the year would be profitable for every child, and the welcome especially to the new teachers. Each new member of the faculty had been assigned a Faculty Friend, who introduced the newcomer at the luncheon and also helped during the first few months of the school month in any way possible.

Another major project undertaken in 1969 was the Rotary co-sponsoring of a project for a community swimming pool, with the Somerton City Council. VISTA workers in Somerton urged successfully that the project be undertaken, and much has been accomplished thus far, including the raising of almost $8,000 for the pool. The project will be continued until it is completed, as momentous a task as it is for a small service club in a small community; but the effort serves to indicate the willingness of the Rotarians to consider the needs of the community and especially the children.

Other projects in which the Somerton Rotary has been of direct help to migrant children is the sponsoring of the local Boy Scouts of America in the community, the financial backing of the Somerton Little League, dental and health care for needy children, vocational programs for junior high school students, and a project of having student guests attend regular meetings once a month.

Various migrant consultants have often been called upon to speak at the weekly Rotary meetings, and this type of program has served an excellent purpose of keeping the local leaders informed about migrant needs and concerns. The Rotarians have also been taken on different tours of the school to see the closed-circuit television facility, the industrial arts and home economics programs, and the Instructional Materials Center. After one visit to the Center two years ago, the local magazine chairman started the project of having the school receive a regular copy of the Rotarian for student reading.

With the meeting place at the school and with the district's administrators actively involved in Rotary work, Somerton has an advantage that might not be possible elsewhere. Regardless of other factors, however, Rotarians in Somerton have been very much a part of any success that the district has had, and every effort will be made to continue a fine relationship and partnership.

I. TELEVISION MAGIC: A Creative Dimension

Reference has already been made to some of the uses of Somerton's closed circuit television facility. These included the daily news broadcast in Spanish and English, special classroom programs taped and viewed by many students, and special programs for the adults at the open houses.

For the primary children, the district was fortunate to have available for regular showing the "I Can Do It Myself" series for Oral English Development. In addition, the director of the television facility made arrangements during the 1969-70 school year to travel to Yuma each morning to tape "Sesame Street" for showing in Somerton that afternoon. "Sesame Street" had not been available in Somerton because of cable transmission, but efforts are underway to have cable facilities extended to the Somerton area late in 1970.

During the summer program in 1969, the district experimented with a project of vocabulary development by supraliminal projection of words in various televised cartoons and short features. Testing showed that the program had some success but not enough to warrant future time, money, and effort since other techniques would be equally effective. The point, however, is that the television equipment was available for the supraliminal work and the experiment was able to be performed. Other general uses of television include the showing of major events to all interested classes. Not many American school children were able to see Apollo XII land on the moon and the moon walk that followed about four hours later, since these events happened at midnight and 4:00 a.m. Arizona time. Somerton's students did see these two events the following morning, however, since the television director had volunteered to be in his studio to video-tape the action and have it ready for replay the following morning. Until something better comes along, that event is still on video-tape and can be seen over and over again as it might have value in a unit of work for any class.

Television also has the potential of improving the quality of

teacher performance, and the district has made use of this approach in a number of ways in the past two years. The university instructors in the extension classes have televised teachers doing a number of things, along with regular inservice use and volunteer teacher evaluation. Many new programs of a micro-teaching or mini-course nature are being developed, and the district is studying these carefully to see which ones might have value for the Somerton faculty.

With the great need that exists in the area for Oral English Development, the district also decided recently that a televised series of daily 15-minute lessons would be able to reach more children than one teacher could ever hope to reach in a single day. The project was launched in the summer of 1970 with pilot films, some additional equipment, some consultation from a professional television worker, and hundreds of hours preparing scripts and practicing on various formats and approaches. The series is scheduled for the 1970-71 school year, with the daily lesson televised into every fourth, fifth, and sixth grade classroom. The impact of the program, however, will not be with the television teacher alone but with a bilingual teacher's aide in each of these classrooms during the lesson. The aide will immediately group those students in each classroom who need help the most for reinforcement and follow-up. These aides will meet each morning with the television teacher to learn what the lesson for the day will be, what activities will be needed in the reinforcement session, and what instructions are applicable for any written or ditto work. The classroom aide will also be aware of the televised lesson and will be able to observe the aide at work in order to keep informed of what language growth is occurring. As a new program, some changes might have to be made; if everything works as expected, though, the efforts will result in 160 lessons preserved on videotape. These could be used with very few changes year after year, and they might also be of use to other districts having migrant, bilingual students. Once the series is completed, the plan calls for the development of a similar program for the primary grades and then a program of beginning Spanish, first for the older students and then a second one for the younger students.

With the advent of cable television in Somerton there is also the possibility of having an adult education program that could reach hundreds of parents. The school district has already been told that when cable facilities are installed in Somerton, anything televised at the school level can be transmitted into the homes that are on the cable network. Besides having vast communication possibilities, this extension of the medium would be ideal for the type of adult education needed by many migrant parents who want to learn English but are reluctant to attend evening classes. Along with many other areas, this

is definitely one that will be studied carefully by everyone in Somerton in the months and years to come.

J. THE RECORD TRANSFER SYSTEM: Computerized Competence

Though the National Student Record Transfer System is new to migrant child education, its potential is great for meeting one of the greatest needs of migrant children.

Somerton joins other migrant schools across the country in hope of a rapid implementation of the system that promises quick access to a migrant child's educational record from other schools. This traditional lapse of time for the records to catch up with the student never helps a child and often is damaging. All that a school can do is to have enough flexibility to take the migrant child at any time, attempt to diagnose his needs, and then prescribe the best classroom situation for him.

With the speed that the Record Transfer System promises, though, the school district will save many hours in the areas of health and family data. The educational information will serve as a guide for more reliable placement and a quicker start on the child's individual prescription for learning. These hours saved can well be used by everyone concerned to focus more directly on the many other problems in any school district.

K. TEACHER EXCHANGES AND CONSULTATION: Wider Views

Brief mention has been made of the Teacher Exchange program sponsored yearly in Arizona by the Migrant Child Education Division of the Arizona Department of Education. Though only a week long, these exchanges have enabled many of Somerton's teachers to gather a significant view of what other migrant schools are accomplishing. Visits have been made to California, Washington, Colorado, and Texas.

Following each visit, the teachers involved have prepared reports for the Arizona Department of Education and have also reported to the local Board of Trustees and faculty. Every visit to date has resulted in a significant change in some part of the Somerton program because of an idea or the modification of an idea gathered from some successful migrant project. Somerton has also had the policy of sending teachers on these exchange programs, instead of administrators, since the teachers will most often be the ones to watch more carefully for what would work in their classroom or school.

In other areas, three of Somerton's faculty members were asked to serve as consultants for a statewide meeting of migrant school personnel at Arizona State University in 1969. Other consultation use has been at statewide meetings sponsored by the Arizona Education Association and in individual school districts. In addition, the district is finding that it is hosting more and more teachers and administrators from Arizona and from out-of-state for visitation periods. Two recent highlights included hosting a group of 35 New York educators and a group of ten others from five different states who were in Arizona to attend a national migrant meeting at Arizona State University. This type of visitation is encouraged since the Somerton staff has often expressed the opinion that much is learned from others who are willing to visit and then discuss common problems of teaching the migrant child.

L. EVALUATION: A Matter of Direction

In February of 1969, the district initiated a comprehensive testing program that was designed to show what progress is being made by the Spanish surnamed migrant, the Spanish surnamed permanent child, and the Anglo. The California Achievement Test is used, and assistance is provided by Arizona State University in scoring many of the tests and in providing an analysis and a breakdown of the scoring patterns.

In addition to the C.A.T., a readiness test is given to kindergarten children. Subscores are given for all categories of every test, and since the tests have been given twice now, comparisons between 1969 and 1970 are available.

At the readiness level, most scores are similar except in the category of concepts. The permanent child outscores the migrant by a measure of 4.74, signigicant to .05 (F-ratio). The Anglo kindergartener, though, outscores the total Spanish surnamed group 19.56, with significance at the .01 level. On the total battery, though, no significance exists.

The C.A.T. Lower Primary was administered to first and second graders. In almost every category, the permanent child exceeds the migrant and the Anglo exceeds the total Spanish surnamed group. As expected, the significant differences are in word recognition, picture association, vocabulary total, reading total, mechanics of English, spelling, and language total. The Spanish surnamed child has a slight advantage in arithmetic fundamentals.

A comparison between 1969 and 1970 showed the migrant primary student making the most progress of the three groups, although all three levels were so similar to both years that no significance was recorded.

The Upper Primary test was administered to students at the third grade level and showed no significant differences between the

Spanish surnamed migrant and permanent children. The Anglo child at this grade level, though, was somewhat advanced over his Spanish surnamed counterpart. The one exception was in the area of arithmetic fundamentals, where the migrant child scored higher than any other group. Explanations for this usually go back to the migrant child's early training in Mexican schools, where arithmetic is stressed and, obviously, well taught since children from Mexico score high in this area at all grade levels. One other factor is that the English language is not a handicap for this work, and the native user of Spanish is able to show his true ability.

The elementary test included grades four, five, and six. This test showed more of a spread between the migrant and permanent children, regardless of whether the permanent children were Anglo or Spanish surnamed. Of special interest is that the 1970 test showed a significant increase in arithmetic totals for the migrant child, but it also showed significant increases for the other groups. Reading and language totals were not significantly different for the two years of testing.

The Junior High test was given to students in the seventh and eighth grades and showed an even wider spread between the Spanish surnamed child and the Anglo. However, in only one area, vocabulary, did the Spanish surnamed permanent child score significantly better than the migrant. Like many other sections of the test, all three groups did better in 1970 in arithmetic totals, but the Anglo group did the best.

By way of summary, the migrant child in his first year of school is weak only in the readiness level of concepts. As all the children progress through school, the Anglo child with his native ability to use the English language will outdistance Spanish speaking, bilingual children. What Somerton has learned from the beginning of this program is to be concerned over the specific areas of weakness for all the groups involved. Comparisons among the groups are not valid for many obvious reasons in any given year, but the district hopes that by keeping track of a given group from

year to year that it can be aware of learning patterns and needs. The single negative factor involved at this point is that the migrant population is never always the same, and comparisons between years will not be as valid as they will be for more stable population groups. The testing program, though, used in conjunction with other special testing for specific groups and individuals, will at least give the Somerton faculty some guidelines each year as to where they are meeting objectives and where they are falling short. Much more can be done if teachers have a starting point, and test scores can provide that.

M. REWARDS FOR ACHIEVEMENT: Bonus Bonanza

In case readers have not discovered this for themselves by this time, let it be stated now that the board members, administrators, teachers, and staff members in Somerton are exceedingly proud of what they have accomplished in the past few years. Pride is a nice ingredient to have for the combination of miscellaneous items blended together to form a positive attitude toward all children and the learning process. Pride in isolation, though, has a way of vanishing quickly, and the Somerton district has been fortunate in the past two years to receive several distinctive awards that have maintained and strengthened not only the school staff but also the students and the community.

Of major importance was the announcement in the spring of 1969 that the Somerton School District was one of two in Arizona to be awarded a Certificate of Merit in the National Education Association--Thom McAn School Board Awards Program. To be eligible for this award, the local Association of Classroom Teachers, or Education Association, has to decide that a school board is eligible and then nominate their board with supporting evidence. Somerton's teachers felt that their board members had been outstanding in effecting so many improved changes in the total educational picture. Visitors to Somerton in recent months are amazed to find a school facility so updated and modern, despite the fact that many students are housed in a 41 year old building. The board, however, authorized generous capital outlay expenditures for remodeling, complete painting of the exterior of the "old" building for the first time ever, new furniture to replace outdated and fastened down student desks and chairs, refrigeration, some carpeting, many audiovisual additions, and dozens of other similar items. The board also has long been interested in knowing of the total curriculum program and helping in any way possible to improve the conditions for all children. Because of these reasons, along with many more, the Somerton board was nominated and awarded the Certificate of Merit to help support the teachers' feeling that some fine things were indeed happening in Somerton.

Another major event occurred recently when the Somerton Education Association was awarded a first prize for its entry in the Arizona Education Association's annual competition to honor districts with outstanding internal and external communication. Three categories were possible in this competition, and Somerton's entry was considered the finest for districts of up to 100 teachers. Included in the entry were the many newsletters to parents, publicity releases to the local newspaper, copies of the school newspaper, and summaries of the many other ways in which the Somerton staff is able to communicate.

Perhaps the finest recognition possible came to Somerton in the fall of 1969 when Mrs. Lydia Swengel was selected as Arizona's Teacher of the Year. The district had come close the preceding year when Mr. John Dalton had been named as a runnerup in the statewide competition, but Mrs. Swengel's honor was a definite highlight of her fine career and devotion to migrant children. After being nominated by her fellow teachers, Mrs. Swengel gathered various items for a scrapbook for the state and national competition, and the support that she received from throughout the state was overwhelming. Her scrapbook for national competition will be entered for the 1971 competition, and Somerton's faculty, parents, and children will be very surprised if she does not become National Teacher of the Year. The surprise will be honest, since these people cannot imagine anyone else being more dedicated or devoted to teaching.

Other honors have come to Somerton in the form of some national publicity through professional articles, statewide recognition for many activities, and locally because of community involvement.

No one feels, however, that the best has been done and the job completed. The needs of all children today remain as great as ever, and Somerton will continue each year to receive hundreds of new migrant children with needs as demanding as ever, if not more so. The entire point of "The Somerton Story," though, is that the district has been trying its best to improve the education for all of its students. Some things have worked better than others, but the district hopes that each year the total program will continue to improve. With everyone working toward that goal in a highly effective sense of cooperation, it will definitely be realized.